

The WPA Train-the-Trainers Workshop on Mental Health in Primary Care (Ibadan, Nigeria, January 26-30, 2009)

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A 5-day WPA training workshop for the teachers of mental health in community health officers' training institutions in the southwest of Nigeria took place at the University of Ibadan Conference Centre, Ibadan from 26 to 30 January, 2009. There were 25 participants selected from the 6 southwestern states (Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, and Ekiti) and the two Yoruba speaking north-central states (Kogi and Kwara).

The workshop aimed to provide the participants with:

- Knowledge, skills and competencies around mental health and mental disorders as well as common neurological disorders, and their contribution to physical health, economic and social outcomes.
- Understanding of linkages between mental health and child health, reproductive health, malaria and HIV.
- Understanding of the general policy and implementation contexts for primary care.
- Understanding of mental health policy and legislation.
- Skills about working with the community, and supporting volunteer community health workers.
- Skills about disaster management.

Selection of participants was made through the National Primary Health Care Development Agency working with the heads of the various institutions. The selected participants were experienced, senior teachers serving in colleges of health technology, community health officers' training programs in teaching hospitals, and community health officer tutors' courses in the University College Hospital Ibadan. There were also representatives of the Community Health

Officers' Registration Board (the agency responsible for developing community health officers' curriculum and licensing of practitioners) and the National Primary Health Care Development Agency.

The program ran daily from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. using an adapted curriculum, following a general health systems approach and compatible with the World Health Organization Primary Health Care (WHO-PHC) guidelines. The curriculum had been previously developed by R. Jenkins for Kenya, and subsequently adapted for and used in Ghana (V. Doku), Malawi (F. Kauye) and Pakistan (R. Taj and R. Jenkins). Short didactic lectures were augmented with 23 role plays and case vignette discussions. The resource persons were O. Gureje, R. Jenkins and V. Doku. Participants were administered a pre- and post-workshop questionnaire to assess their knowledge of mental health issues and evaluate the changes due to the training. The analysis of the tests will be conducted in due course.

An important highlight of the workshop was the requirement for the participants to develop specific plans of action that build on the outcome of the training. The following were the plans collectively agreed upon:

- Provision of written report on the workshop to the authorities at their institutions within one week of completion of workshop.

- Plan to incorporate the contents of the WHO-PHC guidelines into their lecture notes on mental health within the next academic session.
- Plan to improve their teaching skills by employing role plays and discussions by their students.
- Having understood the relationship between mental health and reproductive health, malaria, HIV/AIDS and child health, the participants resolved to sensitize teachers of other subjects in their institutions to the relevance of mental health to the other courses and subjects.
- Specific plan to forward to Ibadan the academic timetable of their institutions indicating when mental health courses would be taught so as to facilitate monitoring and support visit by O. Gureje and his team in Ibadan.

It was agreed to have periodic monitoring, evaluation and boosting of the knowledge already acquired through scheduled visits to the participants in their respective institutions to observe them teaching their students using the skills acquired during the training.

This initiative is part of the WPA Action Plan 2008-2011 (1).

Reference

1. Maj M. The WPA Action Plan 2008-2011. *World Psychiatry* 2008;7:129-30.